

# RCA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

OCTOBER, 2007

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

INDIANAPOLIS, IN

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE RCA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB WILL BE  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2nd, 6:30 PM AT DOOKZ SPORTS GRILL,  
3800 E. 96<sup>th</sup> STREET, INDIANAPOLIS, IN

## RCA ARC NEWS

**SUMMARY OF THE SEPTEMBER MEETING** – The September 4<sup>th</sup> meeting was presided over by vice president Dave Jarvis, N9KZJ. The repeater status was discussed... The big UPS which was able to power the entire repeater has died. This was one of two given to the Club by Thomson when the Company moved from the Sherman Drive location. The other died years ago. Batteries were replaced several years ago at a cost of over one hundred dollars. It was recommended to get a few small UPSs to power the two computers in the repeater shack and one or more of the routers/switches at Mike Koss' club station. This would keep the computers and internet up during short power outages. Dave Brown will look into refurbished UPSs and batteries. John Garino is working on updating the repeater controller software. John wrote the current version (about 10 years ago) of the repeater which runs on a PC. Dave, N9KZJ, reported on some upcoming special event stations. The W9RCA trustee has been changed to Jim, K9RU. Jim will change the information in QRZ.com to reflect the current Club email address and any other updates which need to be done. –AF9A

**ECHOLINK CHANGES ON THE '88 REPEATER** -- As many of you have already noticed, in the last six months we have added some new functionality to the W9RCA repeater. This was accomplished using a versatile text to speech female voice program called EchoTime TTS Plus. Using touch tone commands (see [www.w9rca.org/repeater.html](http://www.w9rca.org/repeater.html)), users have the ability to have the time, the current weather forecast, the future weather forecast, and current weather warnings read to them. We currently have it set to voice identify at the top of every hour and give the 88.5 tone access information along with telling people to press 88\* for further information. We also have it announce the Indianapolis Radio Club and the Hoosier DX and Contest Club meetings once a month.

Recently, John Garino, KF9UH, modified the repeater code to no longer trap the "\*". This allows us to use more of the built-in commands in the EchoTime TTS Plus program. \*99\* will now read the current WWV report. \*60\* through \*89\* will read back the corresponding textual informational file.

That is where I need your help! What kinds of information should we have available on the repeater? The program can read back any text file we want, and we have 30 spots available. Think about the kinds of information you would like to have at your fingertips when you are out and about and only have your HT available. Think about information that a ham passing through the area might like to know. This is not limited to the RCA ARC members, we would like to here from anyone using the repeater. Be creative and send your ideas to [n9kt@arrl.net](mailto:n9kt@arrl.net)! -  
-David, N9KT

## HAMFESTS; EVENTS

- 29-30 Sep Chicago FM Club, Belvidere, IL <http://www.chicagofmclub.org/>
- 7 Oct Hoosier Hills Hamfest, Bedford, IN <http://www.w9yyq.org/hamfest/>
- 13 Oct Indiana Radio Club Council Meeting, Noblesville, IN  
<http://www.inarrl.org/ircc.html>
- 17-18 Nov Fort Wayne Hamfest, Ft. Wayne, IN <http://www.fortwaynehamfest.com/>
- 24 Nov EARS & The Ham Station, Evansville, IN <http://w9ear.org/hamfest.htm>

## AN HISTORIC DAY IS COMING UP!

Fifty years ago, on October 4, 1957, America was stunned when the "Space Age" arrived unexpectedly. As Americans settled in to watch the premier of "Leave It to Beaver", the Soviet Union launched the world's first "artificial moon" - the satellite Sputnik.[1] (References are listed at the end of this newsletter).

I was born just after Sputnik, and it was hard for me to imagine just how big a deal this was in the United States until I read a number of accounts in QST and on the web.

Weighing in at 184 pounds and slightly larger than a basketball, Sputnik flew over the surface of the earth at 18,000 miles per hour at a height of 500 miles. It circled the globe every 96 minutes, and, most horribly, it flew unimpeded over the U.S. seven times a day.[2] The sound of its persistent "beep...beep...beep" was a constant reminder to the nation that it was up there, watching us from the high ground of space.

David C. Hanson says in "Sputnik and the Origins of the Space Race" that, "The American response to Sputnik bordered on hysteria. The Chicago Daily News declared that if the Soviets "could deliver a 184-pound 'moon' into a predetermined pattern 560 miles out into space, the day is not far distant when they could deliver a death-dealing warhead onto a predetermined target almost anywhere on the earth's surface." Newsweek magazine warned that several dozen Sputniks equipped with nuclear bombs could "spew their lethal fallout over the U.S. and Europe.""[3]

Senator Lyndon Johnson envisioned a day when the Soviets would be "dropping bombs on us from space like kids dropping rocks onto cars from freeway overpasses - the control of space means the control of the world . that is the ultimate position: the position of total control over earth that lies in outer space".[4]

In "The Sputnik Challenge", Robert A. Divine says, "Physicist Edward Teller, the patron saint of the hydrogen bomb, stated that the United States had lost "a battle more important and greater than Pearl Harbor." and that "U.S. News & World Report said the launching ranked alongside nuclear fission in military importance."[5]

Senator Mike Mansfield predicted that, "What is at stake is nothing less than our survival" and called for a "new Manhattan Project" to beat the Soviets in space.[1] & [17]

Americans were so concerned that polling indicated that most were willing to see the national debt limit raised and forgo a proposed tax cut in order to get the United States into space.[1] A Gallup poll after the launch showed that sixty percent of Americans believed we would shortly be in a nuclear war.[6]

WWV even shut down it's 20 MHz transmitter during evening overhead passes so Americans would have a clear frequency to hear the beeps on 20.005 MHz.[7]

\*Everyone\* went out at night to see it fly over - "My father had the only pair of binoculars in the neighborhood. That night he led a crowd of us into a field not far from the house, and there, one by one, sharing the glasses, we saw it. . . to our eyes but a dot, a dim light smaller than the all but the faintest stars. But it was there. And it moved across our heavens and it dominated our world." -Jesse H. Moore V[8]

The American Radio Relay League was contacted by The National Academy of Sciences to ask its 70,000 "ham" radio operator membership to help them track Sputnik. Within twenty-four hours, the hams responded with reports to the National Science Foundation.[1]

Photos contrasting Chicago teenagers having fun jitterbugging while intense Russian teenagers studied math and physics were published in Life Magazine.[9] Engineering colleges were flooded with new students the following quarter.[10]

On Wall Street, investors scrambled for stocks with a rocket connection and dumped everything else.[18]

The Saturday following the launch, Daniel S. Goldin, who became the ninth NASA administrator, went to his college physics class. He vividly remembers that the professor had written "Sputnik Is Watching You" on the blackboard.[1]

In a front-page story, the Times discussed speculation by scientists that the Soviets might detonate a nuclear weapon on the moon during a lunar eclipse to commemorate the Bolshevik Revolution. "The explosion of a bomb on a moon darkened briefly in eclipse would create an illumination on the earth brighter than the light of a full moon".[11] NBC's "Today" carried the Nov. 7 eclipse live, just in case anything happened.[12]

Fear had risen so high from the launch that Michael Wright in "Here Comes Sputnik!" says that "Everyone on Johnston Island in the Pacific were issued sidearms to carry at all times." He also tells this story, "Jim Dawsons, science writer for the Star Tribune, wrote about how his third grade teacher was very nervous at the time. His school at Omaha, Neb., was just a few miles from the Air Force's Strategic Air Command headquarters. A fleet of F-100 fighters appeared in the sky coming right for the school. "MiGs!" the teacher shrieked. "MiGs!" She ran, hysterical, from the classroom, convinced they were about to be nuked by Russian fighter jets."[13]

In Europe, the reaction towards Sputnik was much stronger. The launch of Sputnik clearly showed the Europeans that the Soviet Union had overtaken America in technological superiority which caused many countries to try to separate themselves from the United States.[14]

The launch of Sputnik was so pivotal that even time became "pre-Sputnik" or "post-Sputnik". Soon after, the term "Space Age" was coined to refer to the new time. October 4th would simply become known as "Sputnik Night." [15]

As an NBC Radio announcer stated some 12 hours after Sputnik was launched, "Listen now, for the sound that forevermore separates the old from the new"  
[16]: <http://www.amsat.org/amsat/features/sounds/sputnk1b.wav>

To read further accounts about America's reaction to Sputnik, please follow some of the links in my footnotes at the end of this newsletter. Also, if any of you have any personal anecdotes about Sputnik, I would \*love\* to hear them. Please email them to me at n9kt@arrl.net --David Spoelstra, N9KT

## ARRL CONTINUES TO DEAL WITH DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OVER PAVE PAWS SITES

The ARRL participated in a teleconference call on Wednesday, September 19, with the Department of Defense (DoD) regarding Amateur Radio repeaters interfering with the Air Force's PAVE Paws radar system.

According to ARRL Regulatory Branch Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND, "The DoD acknowledges that it has seen changes at some repeater sites, but not all of them." He said the DoD has revisited the Massachusetts repeaters, located near Otis Air Force Base on Cape Cod, to "remeasure the numbers. Some Massachusetts repeater owners have volunteered to completely turn off their systems and some others have made changes, but more is needed at both PAVE Paws radar sites."

The DoD, Henderson continued, has identified additional sources of interference in Massachusetts. "This was not really unexpected and is part of what has become an ongoing project. The ARRL will begin working with these repeater owners as soon as the DoD provides us with specific information," he said.

In California, where more than 100 repeaters are being scrutinized by the DoD, Henderson said the majority of repeaters have not been mitigated: "The Air Force has not had a chance to revisit Beale Air Force Base for new measurements, but it will be happening soon."

Reports have circulated that a number of California repeater owners have decided to take no further action about mitigating the interference unless they receive official notice from the Federal Communications Commission. "If these reports are true," Henderson said, "it is unfortunate. The FCC has stayed abreast of the discussions between the League and the DoD, and they are prepared to act appropriately if they are contacted by the DoD."

He continued: "The DoD has indicated they are willing to allow the ARRL to continue its attempts to mitigate the interference; however, they have expressed a sense of urgency that this must come to a conclusion. Those waiting for FCC action may find it coming sooner rather than later." –ARRL Letter

## LOWER FEES FOR VANITY CALL SIGNS

On September 17<sup>th</sup> the FCC reduced the fee to obtain or renew an Amateur Radio vanity call sign. This represents a 40 percent reduction from its current \$20.80 to \$11.70 and marks the lowest fee in the history of the current vanity call sign program. The vanity call sign fee has fluctuated over the 11 years from a low of \$12 to a high of \$50. The FCC says it anticipates some 14,700 Amateur Radio vanity call sign "payment units" or applications during the next fiscal year, collecting \$171,990 in fees from the program.

Amateur Radio licensees may file for renewal only within 90 days of their license expiration date. All radio amateurs must have an FCC Registration Number (FRN) before filing any application with the Commission. Applicants can obtain an FRN by going to the ULS <<http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls/>> and clicking on the "New Users Register" link. You must supply your Social Security Number to obtain an FRN.

The ARRL VEC and W5YI will process license renewals for vanity call sign holders for a modest fee. The service is available to ARRL members and nonmembers, although League members pay less.

Routine, non-vanity renewals can be done via ULS on line at FCC.org. ARRL offers renewal as a free service for ARRL members for non-vanity license. Trustees of club stations with vanity call signs may renew either via the ULS or through a ARRL. The ARRL is simpler process.

Station Call Sign Administrator, such as ARRL VEC. License application and renewal information and links to the required forms are available on the ARRL Amateur Application Filing FAQ Web page <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/application-filing-faq.html>. The FCC's forms page <http://www.fcc.gov/formpage.html> also offers the required forms.

## 1296 MHZ WAS #1 AWARDED TO TEXAS HAM

Al Ward, W5LUA, of Allen, Texas, is the first person to achieve the ARRL's Worked All States (WAS) on 1296 MHz, making him 1296 MHz WAS #1. Ward first started on his pursuit January 25, 1977, with his first 1296 MHz contact with Leroy May, W5HN (SK). His 30 year quest ended last week, with confirmed contacts with Wyoming, Utah and Idaho, giving Ward his last three needed states, thanks to Paul Perryman's, WA5WCP, EME DXpedition. –ARRL Letter

"I couldn't have done this without Paul," Ward said. "Also, thanks to Ron Roche, K0ALL, and Barry Malowanchuk, VE4MA, in North Dakota for number 47 in August. Without them, it just wouldn't have been possible." After collecting his 50th QSL card, Ward drove from his home in Texas to Little Rock, Arkansas so ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, could verify his cards and complete his WAS paperwork. "Verifying QSL cards from 30 years of activity brought back a lot of memories of several stations active on 1296, many who are Silent Keys now," Harrison said. –ARRL Letter

## SHORTS

### HERE ARE THE SPUTNIK REFERENCES...

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<http://history.nasa.gov/sputnik/sputorig.html>
- [3] Sputnik and the Origins of the Space Race by David C. Hanson, Virginia Western Community College [http://www.vw.vccs.edu/vwhansd/HIS122/Space\\_Race.html](http://www.vw.vccs.edu/vwhansd/HIS122/Space_Race.html)
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- [5] The Sputnik Challenge, Robert A. Divine, Oxford University Press, 1993
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<http://www.spacetoday.org/Satellites/Hamsats/Hamsats1990s/Hamsats90sMiniSputnik.html> and THE CF105 AVRO ARROW: SPUTNIK, <http://va3kgb.ve3kbr.com/cf105/sputnik.htm>

- [8] <http://sputnikbook.net/comments.php>
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<http://www.thenagain.info/webChron/Technology/Sputnik.html>
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<http://zebu.uoregon.edu/~js/space/lectures/lec09.html>
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<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,862748,00.html>
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